

Mutual benefits for communities, students, and the university

Faith, Service, and Youth Wellness: The Columbus Congregations for Healthy Youth (CoCHY) Service-Learning Initiative

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Courses: Public Health 850, Sociology 391

Teams from 10 local congregations were matched with graduate students who assisted them in developing health promotion activities for youth. Undergraduate students helped implement these projects, including a health fair for youth, programs on child sexual abuse and youth mental health issues, an abstinence program, a physical activity program, and a sexuality workshop for teens led by clergy and staff from the Columbus Health Department.

Working with the congregations was an eye-opening experience for the students. In their reflections, graduate students often expressed surprise that the community partners were unfamiliar with the need to specify realistic outcomes or provide a rationale for why their proposed program should work. The project achieved several goals:

- Congregations became more aware of university resources available to help them create and sustain more effective wellness programming.
- Students became aware of the potential and limitations of working with community partners.
- Teaming created new relationships across the congregations and enabled the university to develop relationships with groups they had not worked with before.



Our students were amazed at the resources available in an urban setting. At the same time, students learned that resources alone do not create a learning environment.

University Connections

Faith in Healthy Youth

Mentoring at Lima Senior High School

Doug Sutton-Ramspeck, Lecturer, English, OSU Lima; Lynn Sametz, K-12 Outreach, OSU Lima. Community Partners: Jeff McClellan, Multiple Intelligences Principal, Lima Senior High School; Doug Kent, Performance Based Principal, Lima Senior High School; Judy Shisler, Progressive Based Principal, Lima Senior High School

Courses: Education T&L 694.5, English 467

Mentors learn and grow as much as those they help. This project paired OSU Lima students with Lima high school students whose life experiences are very different from theirs to help the younger students prepare for the Ohio Graduation Test. Ohio State students worked with high school students and staff to produce a literary journal of poetry, fiction, and art. A Taste of College Day brought 50 of the mentored high school students to campus for “mock” classes in astronomy, English, history, and biology and a campus tour.

- OSU Lima students learned about tutoring theory and approaches to the improvement of writing.
- Education majors reaffirmed their commitment to teaching.
- OSU Lima students have a better understanding of diversity and urban education.
- High school students improved their performance on standardized tests and expanded their horizons for postsecondary education.
- The publication of the literary journal *Voices* helped Lima Senior high school students improve their writing skills and express themselves in forms not usually encouraged in a testing culture.
- The high school will continue to produce the journal with the assistance of an OSU Lima student editor.
- Ten Lima Senior high school students received \$50 awards for their creative efforts.